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A Biblical Novel.

The Story of Sodom; A Biblical Episode. By W. C. Kitchin. New York: Hunt and Eaton. 1891. Pp. 285. Price, ——.

This is announced as the "first of a projected series of biblical tales, beginning with the days of Abraham and coming down to the return from Babylonish Captivity." The idea is to produce a succession of historical novels based upon the facts related in the Old Testament. A number of the romantic incidents therein contained will be taken as a basis of the story, and then an effort will be made "to portray, by the creation of imaginary personages and occurrences, the social, religious, and political physiognomy of the time." That this will be difficult of accomplishment the author is ready to acknowledge, and that a perfect reproduction of the age will not be attainable; but he anticipates a fair degree of success. An impetus was given to this sort of literature by the extraordinary favor with which Ben-Hur was received, and already many volumes have been printed which have biblical personages for their heroes, about whom a little history and a great deal of romance have been woven. No one of them has attracted any particular attention, likely because it was not merited. The novels do not sell any better, for irreligious people shun them, and religions people are not to a great extent novel buyers. It is doubtful, also, whether it is wise to throw a mass of fiction around Bible characters, for the line between the historic facts and the novelist's fancies will become hazy, and the entire conception of the personage may be wrongly given. That this Story of Sodom contains some biblical history, and some good reproduction of that early Abrahamic time, may be acknowledged. It is interesting reading, too. But one questions whether after all it is a success, and whether indeed it ought to be such.

An Evangelist on Higher Criticism.

The Highest Critics vs. the Higher Critics. By Rev. L. W. Munhall, M. A., Evangelist. Chicago: F. H. Revell Co. 1892. Pp. 200 Price $1.00.

That books should be written to controvert the teachings of the Higher Critics is quite as laudable and desirable as that books should be written to prevent or to maintain those teachings. But it is unfortunate when the defense of traditional views falls into incompetent hands—incompetent not only from lack of knowledge in the matters treated, but also from lack of balanced judgment and good temper. That these three failings characterize the author of this book appears when he speaks of "those higher critics who by proper literary and historical tests are trying . . . *to ascertain* the *exact text* [italics ours] of the Holy Scriptures;" when he affirms that "any doctrine of inspiration save verbal, means a denial of the supernaturalness of the Bible," meaning by verbal inspiration that "the original writings, the *ipsissima verba*, were given word by word from God;" and when he speaks of many higher critics who "were failures in the pastorate," "know little of the transforming power of God's word," "have lost in large measure whatever of spiritual life and power they may once have had," and "have fallen into a lifeless formalism." Mr. Munhall professes to allow that there are two classes of higher critics—good and bad, but all the higher critics whom he is acquainted with belong immediately to the latter class. The violent egotism which mars many a page puts one out of sympathy with the writer, as does also his Adventist views and his unhistoric treatment of Old Testament prophecy. The book is